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In Memoriam

HOWARD GARDNER NICHOLS



*“His soul was made for the noblest
society. Wherever there is knowledge,
wherever there is virtue, wherever
there is beauty, he will find a home”*

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

BY S. L. S.

A RARELY gifted young life has passed from our sight. That its memory, enshrined in loving hearts, may become an inspiration to others, this memorial is prepared by one who knew and loved Gardner Nichols from his youth.

Like some sweet song too soon ended, his life — pure, as it was strong; simple, as it was heroic — is worthy of the imitation of the young men of this generation.

Howard Gardner Nichols, eldest child and only son of John Howard and Charlotte Peabody Nichols, was born April 16, 1871, at Haverhill, Massachusetts, where his earliest years were passed, and where he received his first instruction, at a private kindergarten. His teacher writes: "What a glorious truth that every one forms his own character. Gardner had the privilege of carving his own statue; of giving an existence to the ideal of his highest thought of a man; of cultivating himself into the noblest conception of faithfulness in stewardship. His life has been so beautiful, so full of fruit in acts and efforts, that I shrink from adding even a word;

he was my idol. For two short years it was my joy to teach him, and to feel the brightness of his sunny presence."

Removing to Newton, he entered the Bigelow School, where he remained until fitted for the Boston Latin School. In the summer of 1881, with his father, mother, and eldest sister, he went to Europe for three months. At the time of his graduation from Harvard he said of this trip, "Even now I remember most of what I saw and did." He kept a little diary, very brief and boyish, yet clearly pointing to the tastes of later years. We give a few extracts: —

"July 18. British Museum in A. M.; National Gallery in P. M.; liked Landseer's dog pictures.

"July 20. Rotterdam. Drove round; saw many windmills; to the Hague in P. M.; to picture gallery; saw Paul Potter's bull — fine picture.

"July 26. To Munich in A. M.; women working in fields; cows ploughing; saw a wild deer; geese.

"July 27–31. Went to picture galleries; bands; soldiers; Schützenfest. Saw an important man — the king.

"August 10. Took early train to Visp; walked to St. Nicholas in five hours; drove on to Zermatt; saw snow mountains — the Matterhorn; saw lights of party ascending.

"August 14. Chamounix ; Hotel Mt. Blanc ; went to church in A. M. ; English service ; very good sermon ; saw Mont Blanc."

One day, when Gardner was quite young, his attention, with that of his father, was attracted by an unusual noise in a tree at the back of the house. He writes: "It was a perfectly still, cloudless morning, with not a breath of wind stirring. On close examination we noticed something red bobbing backward and forward on the side of a dead limb, near the top of the tree ; my father went for his gun, and in a moment an innocent little downy woodpecker, a male in full plumage, with a beautiful scarlet crest, was our victim. I could hardly believe it was he who had caused all that noise. This aroused my interest, and from that day to this (the spring of 1893), with always increasing enthusiasm, I have been a devoted student of ornithology in particular ; of all nature in general. This one incident changed me from a bookworm to a young naturalist, and I went now constantly into the woods. From the time I was eleven years old, when I received a shotgun, until entering college, I spent every Saturday, rain or shine, in the woods."

In speaking of his life at the Latin School, he says: "Here for five years I looked forward to the preliminary examinations for Harvard with awe. After I had passed these without failure in any subject, the finals had no terror for me,

and I passed them clear, with credit in advanced Greek." His parents would have sent him to a private preparatory school, but thought it best for him to be at home during these years. In regard to their opinion he writes: "I must say they were wise. I regard any boarding-school for young boys as dangerous in the extreme; it is preëminently the time when boys should be at home. Then, too, the tendency of private schools is to develop cliques, and men from these schools, when they reach college, consider they are entitled to special privileges not to be granted to those from the public schools; they believe that a private school places them on a higher plane. It is this spirit which is doing more to weaken our school system than attacks from alien-born citizens or religious intolerance. In not patronizing the public schools, we fail to practice what most of us at all events preach, the maintenance of our public school system. I can testify most heartily that this is what I have learned from four years' observation at college."

With his father, in the summer of 1888, he took a trip across the continent of North America by the Canadian Pacific Railway; and in his journal thus vividly describes the approach to Banff: "There were mountains on all sides, most of them covered with snow; they were rugged and seemed like huge pyramids of rock. We passed a little valley with a river flowing through it. Here the

mountains were thickly wooded at the bottom; halfway up were a few trees only, while the rest of the way was steep and rocky. Banff, in the Canadian National Park, is 4500 feet above the sea level, and is noted for its sulphur baths."

While here he ascended the higher of the twin peaks, taking with him a barometer adjusted to tell the height of any mountain. Starting at 10.30 A. M., he reached home at 5.30 P. M., having found the height to be 9000 feet, and the descent harder than the ascent.

After leaving Banff, they went to Glacier. "The railroad passes along the side of the cañon, crossing many bridges, and making very sharp turns; the glacier is large, and as fine as any in Switzerland." Of course Gardner must make the ascent; and a most exciting adventure it proved: "After breakfast, we started to climb the glacier; took gun, but left it at the bottom. We could see where the glacier was, and how it had receded, and began the ascent along its side. After climbing five hundred feet, we came to many deep fissures or chasms, some wide and deep. All of us kept to the side on the rocks as long as we could, and then walked on the snow and ice; the guide, Dr. B., myself, and our dog, composed the party. At 1500 feet the climbing became very hard; I had a common axe, the doctor an ice axe, and the guide nothing but the lunch. The snow had become so firmly packed

that it was almost impossible to get footing, while the angle we were obliged to climb was about fifty degrees, with a deep and wide fissure below. When halfway up, Dr. B. slipped, slid downward, and tried to get his axe into the snow, but failed. he was going quite fast, but, on the second trial, managed to get it firmly into the snow; but he had fallen sixty feet toward a chasm—a little more and he would have gone into it. We now had to climb along the bottom of a perpendicular cliff; went as far as we dared, then told the guide it was too dangerous, and started down. The guide threw my axe upon what he supposed was firm ground, but it slipped, and went into a deep fissure. He thought he could drop the lunch all right, but that too went into the abyss. Our party managed to get down, however, I by sitting on the snow, with a sharp stone in either hand, letting myself down. The dog climbed about with ease. At last we got safely to the foot of the glacier, arriving at the hotel at 4.30 P. M. In starting out, we crossed a deep chasm on an immense rock; but when we returned, the way seemed blocked, and we could not get across. While we were upon the glacier, a landslide had taken place; the fissure had opened and swallowed up an immense pile of rock."

This whole diary abounds with interesting items, from which we cull bits here and there. "Saw Chinese settlements; the Chinamen work

for the railroad, or mine for silver or gold. They live in miserable huts. . . . All along the Frazer River, saw where the Indians caught their salmon, drying them on poles with a smoking fire underneath. Mt. Baker could be clearly viewed. It is entirely covered with snow, and though sixty miles away, loomed up like an immense white cloud. The scenery along the Frazer River cañon is the finest we have seen ; this is a very dangerous part of the road. Took photograph of Mt. Baker. We touched the Pacific Ocean at Port Moody, and for twelve miles kept along the seacoast. Eclipse of the moon." A visit to the coal mines at Franklin was especially interesting to Gardner. Our own large cities in the Northwest were visited, and contrasted with their Canadian neighbors. The scenery along the Willamette and Columbia rivers was greatly enjoyed ; also that of the Yellowstone Park, in which the wonderful formations of lime and magnesia in terraces of different colors, the hot springs and geysers, are specially noted. The business and industrial enterprises came in for a share of critical observation, remarkable in one so young, Gardner at this time being only seventeen years old. At Olympia he found "Dwight cloth." He took many photographs, which assisted in making this trip what he later called one of the most helpful he had ever made. In June, 1889, he graduated from the Latin School.

The next summer, with his eldest sister, he took his second trip to Europe. Making Weimar their headquarters, they enjoyed frequent excursions to the Thuringian forest and the localities memorable in connection with the lives of Goethe, Schiller, and Martin Luther.

Gardner entered very heartily into the home life of his German friends. One day he proposed to Frau G., his hostess, to cook the dinner; she assented, and early the next morning he went to the market, accompanied by the maid who was to carry his purchases, while Frau G. and his sister followed at a distance, enjoying the sight of his earnest, intent face as he did his marketing.

In describing this adventure he writes: "The stove is not like ours, there being one flue but two fires, — one to heat the oven, the other for the open tops. Having no experience with that kind of stove, it took a long time to start the fire; as soon as one fire was going well, it would spoil the draught of the other, but I at last managed to fix the doors and windows so that both would work. The oven has a fire directly underneath, and also contains a hole with a cover, such as we have on the top of our stoves; potatoes and soup were cooking in the oven, but when it was time to cook the steak, the fire which heated the open part would not burn, so I had to take off the soup and broil the steak in the oven, which was difficult, as the potatoes were still cooking there.

At last all was ready. It was greatly in my favor that, having waited so long, they were all hungry, even the guest whom Frau G. had invited for this special occasion. When the soup was removed, I had everything hot and ready to serve; cucumbers and radishes were ready, the steak and peas garnished with parsley, and everything was hot and well cooked, though the beefsteak was a trifle singed and the potatoes somewhat blackened. Frau G. wished me to show her how to cook the steak, which they seldom have here. Indeed, I had to buy a gridiron on which to broil it. We had a pretty mould of ice-cream, which was very attractive and considered a luxury. All pronounced the dinner a success, although they had taken the precaution to buy an extra quantity of bread, fearing they might have to go without dinner. Frau G.'s guest at once engaged me to cook for one month for her boarding school, which consists of seventeen young ladies."

Leaving Weimar, Gardner and his sister journeyed to Leipzig, the latter to remain there for study. Before leaving her, Gardner inspected her apartment, and thinking it would be difficult to escape in case of fire, procured a rope, constructed a fire escape, and did not leave her until he was satisfied she understood using it.

He visited Dresden, Berlin, and Hamburg, where he sailed for New York in time to resume

his studies at Harvard. From the time of landing at Liverpool he had planned and successfully carried out the whole trip, his father giving him full liberty.

The larger portion of the summer of 1891 was most profitably spent with a geological class under the guidance of professors from leading colleges, during which time he visited a number of the New England and Middle States.

Gardner made good use of his time at college, studying more to become "a good all-round scholar" than to gain distinction in any one direction. He arranged for his second sister to take a special course at Radcliffe, during his last year at Harvard, preparatory to her spending some years in study abroad, and watched her progress with keen interest. Towards the end of his college course, he said: "If I had only given a little more time to one special subject, I might graduate 'cum laude.'" He was agreeably surprised when he did graduate "cum laude," with honorable mention in history and natural history.

While at Harvard, he formed a friendship with a fellow fraternity man, Herbert N., and later with his brother Matthew, the three becoming bound by closest ties. They were often at Gardner's home, while in the summer of 1892 he made his first visit to their beautiful home in Minnesota, where the whole family became greatly attached to him and he to them. Writing of a

sail up the Mississippi with his friends, he says : "The scenery is as fine as any I have seen. The bluffs all along the river are of limestone, the deep valleys receding from the river to the prairies. The rocks, which only appear at the tops of the bluffs, often resemble castles ; their sides are wooded, and at one place the hills were covered with vineyards transplanted from the Rhine." He was charmed with Western people and their hospitality, and their hearts were won by his sunny, manly disposition.

In 1893, after enjoying the World's Fair, he visited his friends a second time. The three young men were exceedingly congenial in their tastes, and devoted to each other. They had profited by travel, both at home and abroad, by the best educational advantages, and all were musical. They were well-read, well-bred, pure, true-hearted, noble fellows, with an earnest purpose in life, and an enthusiastic desire to benefit and elevate their fellow-men.

Immediately after the summer of 1893, and in accord with his settled purpose to connect himself with the cotton manufacturing interest, in which his father was engaged, Gardner commenced work with the Great Falls Company at Somersworth, New Hampshire, and later with the Dwight Company, where every opportunity was afforded him to see the working of each department. He devoted his entire energy to a

thorough mastery of the subject, showing a remarkable grasp and facility of comprehension. His contented disposition, power of concentration, and happy faculty of adapting himself to circumstances endeared him to all. From Great Falls he writes: "I like the mills better than I anticipated, but find myself tired when night comes. Am pleasantly located, and spend my evenings in reading and practicing on my violin." He was greatly interested in studying the details of the work, felt he was gaining insight into the business, mastered the technical terms, and found time for occasional tramps.

In February, 1894, he and his friend Matthew ascended Chocorua, and of this trip he writes: "We started Friday A. M.; reached West Ossipee about 1.30, and took stage for Tamworth, four miles away. From there we drove to Fowle's Mills, near where the farmer lives with whom we were to stay. Friday night it began to snow, and continued to do so all Saturday; but we took our snowshoes, and tramped through the woods most of the day. Sunday was clear and cold, so we put on our snowshoes again, and started for Chocorua's peak. We found it hard traveling; the snow was soft, and from three to four feet on a level. At two o'clock we reached the top of the ridge, got into the house, and built a fire. At four we started for the summit, four hundred feet above us, and looking like the

top of the Matterhorn. It was all snow and ice, and so steep we could not at first climb it; but we procured an axe and rope from the house, and after an hour's work reached the top. It was blowing so hard one could not stand up. The top is flat, and about six feet square. There was a beautiful view all about us. I think Chocorua one of the finest mountains in New Hampshire. We reached the house on the ridge all right, but it was six o'clock, and the sun had gone down. The moon, however, gave us plenty of light, and we had a fine walk home, reaching the house about eight o'clock, well repaid for our trip. This locality surpasses almost anything in the mountains I have yet seen. We were very near all those peaks of which Mr. Bolles speaks so frequently."

In the spring of 1894 he took up his residence in Chicopee to continue his industrial work. March 17 he writes: "It is about the same here as at Great Falls. Mr. and Mrs. C. do everything to make my stay pleasant, and I spend most of my evenings at their house. They have devoted an especial chair and table to my use. Mr. C. makes it a point to let me know just what is going on, and as I have a desk in his office, can see all the details of management. He goes through the mills with me about every day, calling my attention to important things to be remembered. Though I thought when at

Great Falls I could not learn as much anywhere else, find I can get a great deal more here."

When he left the Dwight Company the agent wrote of him: "I have never met his equal in all my life for honor and capacity."

From Chicopee he writes: "Walked all through the Mt. Tom range from the house on Nonotuck to the peak opposite Holyoke. There is one species of bird, the duck-hawk, which is found breeding on Mt. Tom, and nowhere else in the State. I wanted very much to locate the birds, and, fortunately, think I know just where they will build. The cliffs on Mt. Tom, where the duck-hawks breed, face the west, and are formed by the crumbling away of the basaltic trap. They are not bare, but covered with Norway and pitch pine. The valley stretching south is simply beautiful, all taken up by fine fields, with here and there a clump of evergreen trees, and reminds me of the country about Weimar. It is very impressive to-day, looking off over the valley, for everything is still, except for the hens, chickens, and an occasional turkey gobbler. The crows have full sway. Easthampton and Northampton appear to be sleeping, and in the background is the little church-spire of Westhampton, three or four miles away." He notes finding the first violet, seeing the first butterfly, and on his walk from Holyoke to Chicopee, heard the croaking of the first frog.

When it became known that the Dwight Manufacturing Company proposed to establish a mill in the South, Mr. Nichols, Senior, received numerous letters pressing the claims and setting forth the advantages of various sites; and, with Gardner, visited many places in order to find the best possible location. It was finally decided to build at the foot of Lookout Mountain in northern Alabama. In September of 1894, Gardner went South to arrange for and superintend this work. One or two extracts from his diary will show that he still keenly observed nature in the midst of engrossing cares.

"November 10, 1894. Finished survey of Black Creek at noon; afternoon in office; tufted tit, winter wren, common chickadee, pygmy nuthatch, golden-crowned kinglets, hairy woodpecker; weather colder than any this autumn; saw no blackbirds; think they must have gone.

"November 15. Car works office in morning; out to Alabama City in afternoon; several hundred plover along Black Creek; flock of 250 meadow-larks in bicycle track; have been there at least three weeks; saw some on top of a high oak, singing a soft plaintive song of four or five notes."

November 29 he arrived in Newton in time for his Thanksgiving dinner, finding among other guests Matthew N. and his sister. During this

visit, he spent two mornings with Matthew in his old room at Cambridge, and both were grieved to hear that Herbert, Matthew's brother, was ill, but it was thought "he would soon be all right."

Gardner returned South, reaching Gadsden December 15, where the first great grief of his life awaited him. He writes home: "We reached here in good health and spirits, Saturday noon, but all was soon completely changed. As I left the train, a telegram, which had been waiting two days, was handed me, and I was made aware that Herbert N. was dead. I couldn't believe it, and can't realize it even now. Just think of it! Have n't heard particulars yet, but shall in a day or two." Later he learned that his friend was taken ill on the evening of Thanksgiving Day, the result of a cold, contracted on a shooting trip, and died after a brief illness. Gardner was greatly overcome by this sudden blow, but comforted himself by writing, "I still have Matthew."

In January, 1895, Gardner writes to his mother: "The weather has been fine since papa came; he enjoys the place very much; we have ridden horseback together a great deal. I am singing bass in the quartette in the Episcopal church, and had a solo last Sunday; enjoy this country more and more; we have had good weather all winter so far. All the birds we have in

Massachusetts during the summer are with us now, the frogs can be heard croaking almost any night, and the bats are flying around; mocking-birds, bluebirds, and robins are singing all the time. I am glad you had Matthew and his sister to dine with you. Think Matthew is quite poorly from the shock he has experienced. Will write grandma now."

To his grandmother he says: "I write this letter as a birthday remembrance, and to offer my congratulations on your eightieth anniversary. Mamma writes you are in excellent health, for which we are all very grateful. I hope you will take the best care of yourself in the future, as you have in the past, and not worry about lands and lots and trespassers, and the like. The contract for the mill was let last week; we shall begin building at once, and hope to have the mill running by November next. Wishing you many happy returns of the day, ever your affectionate grandson."

Now followed a time of the greatest activity, requiring the utmost patience, watchfulness, and tact, and to this work he devoted all his well-trained powers, with the most gratifying results. His father's visits were helpful, and Gardner always managed so to combine business and pleasure that his father enjoyed the visits, and benefited by them as from a brief holiday.

March 15, 1895, he writes: "Am now located

at the office in Alabama City. I go out there at six o'clock in the morning, returning for breakfast at 7.30; after that go down town to attend to whatever business there may be, then out to the factory again; back for dinner; to the factory again, where I stay until supper, at six. Later, go down town and finish correspondence, then to the telegraph office and take a lesson in telegraphy. I do not get much time to practice on my violin, but hope to soon. We have a good quartette at the Episcopal church, where I sing bass. Choir rehearses twice a week, which I enjoy. Am feeling well, but get tired by night, after rushing around all day." Though so busy, he found time to do much for this little church in Gadsden, raising money for a new organ, and assisting in other ways.

He was still feeling the loss of his friend Herbert, but had some consolation in trying to comfort Matthew and Mr. N. in their affliction, and was a great help to them. Matthew never rallied from the blow, and when he took a slight cold in our bleak March weather, had no power of resistance, and after an illness of a few days he, too, fell asleep. Gardner left for Minnesota on receipt of the news, and on March 31 wrote home: "You can imagine how they feel; it is hard to realize that both the boys are gone, and all within three months. Shall miss them very, very much, for I counted them my best friends.

You need not worry about me, as I suppose you will, for I am well and strong. We must all die some time, and I am not troubled about that ; shall die like all others at the appointed time."

On April 6, he says: "Matthew's funeral was private, and at the close of the simple service, we went up to the little cemetery on the side of the Bluffs, overlooking the river, and laid him close beside Herbert. The whole service was lovely, just as he would have wished, even to the singing of the hymns, 'My Jesus, as thou wilt' and 'Now the day is over.' It is a comfort to think that Herbert and Matthew are together, for Matthew could not be left alone. I am sure he died of a broken heart, as he was physically sound in every respect."

April 15, after describing his journey back to Alabama, he tells his mother: "Am glad papa is coming down, though I wish you could come too ; it is delightful here now, and I am sure it will do him much good. The apple and other fruit blooms are out, and the trees are green. There are great numbers of birds, too, many species which I have never seen before, and do wish I had some spare time to study them. I feel much rested after my two weeks' vacation ; it is well I got off ; was very tired. W. is a lovely, restful place, and the home of the N.'s most delightful ; it is dreadfully lonely, though, without the boys, and you don't know how I miss

them. Yesterday was Easter, and a beautiful day. I did not sing in the choir, as, being away, had not attended the rehearsals; the music was very good, and the little church prettily decorated." The next day he again writes: "This is my birthday; it has been showery all day, and now it thunders and lightens. It is hard to tell where twenty-four years have gone, and I am glad they do not number more. Wish you could be here, and hope *next* year you may. I have had a pretty easy life thus far — for twenty-three years and a half, at least — a great deal to be thankful for. I owe it all to you and papa, and if I have n't seemed to appreciate it, it was because I did n't fully realize it before. Of course I can see mistakes, but only experience shows us these. Think I am pretty well started; have a good chance, better than most fellows, and shall work hard to benefit by it; it is a good experience for me down here in every respect, and am glad the opportunity offered itself; shall try to write oftener to you."

In another letter on the 22d of April he says: "Received yours this morning; much obliged for the two books, the one by Mr. Bolles is very lovely. I had to go to Chattanooga last Wednesday, where I surprised papa and came back with him. He had a bad cough, but the weather has been warm and pleasant, and think he is now much better. I sent you a little souvenir

of Lookout Mountain and surrounding places of historic interest. Have not forgotten that next Wednesday is your birthday, and hope this will reach you on time. It is beautiful here now, and am sorry you could not come with papa. The leaves are out, and there are lots of birds and flowers; only wish I had three hours a day to spend in the woods. Yesterday — Sunday — papa and I went to the hotel on the mountain, and took dinner; in the afternoon we walked to the Falls, gathering flowers on the way; the azaleas are in full bloom, pink, white, and some variegated. There are quantities of yellow jasmine, which grows upon the trees like ivy, with a trumpet-like flower, very fragrant; also the blossom of the wild crab-apple, which we found in bloom; in fact, there are too many flowers to mention, and wish C. could be here to gather them. This morning, papa is looking over the work and laying out a reservoir; he enjoys being out of doors, and it is good for him. Yesterday morning he went to our little church, and I sang a solo, 'O rest in the Lord.' I sing one every other Sunday. Hope C. is getting on well with her music — she ought to be able to play my accompaniments at sight by this time. Tell her to stick to it; I'll bring my violin when I come in June, which I hope now to do. With best wishes for a happy birthday, and many happy returns, I am your affectionate son."

A few days later, April 28, he writes to the father of Herbert and Matthew a letter which gives, taken in connection with those already quoted, an idea of the beauty and seriousness of his character: —

“This is Sunday afternoon, and I am sitting on the highest ledge on the eastern side of Look-out Mountain, overlooking the country for miles around. It is such a beautiful day that I saddled my horse after dinner and came up here to write letters. We had a very interesting sermon read this morning, at our little church; one by Phillips Brooks, entitled, ‘Help from the hills.’ The text was Psalm cxxi. 1, ‘I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.’ The central truth of it is the duty of every one of us to seek help from the highest source; it is trouble that tests us and shows what sort of men we are; it is the time of need that lets us see what men think of themselves, how seriously they contemplate their own existence, how they estimate their need by letting us see from whence they seek their help. One man turns instinctively to the lowest, and another to the highest, in his need; and so it is that, in their own way, our hours of need become our judgment days. It is a beautiful sermon all the way through. There is one place, especially, which appeals to us all at this particular time. Bishop Brooks says, ‘It is a wondrous change when a man stops

asking of his distress, How can I throw this off? and asks instead, What did God mean by sending this? Then he may well believe that time and work will help him. Time, with its necessary calming of the first surface tumult, will let him look deeper and deeper into the divine purpose of the sorrow, and will let its deepest and most precious meanings gradually come forth, so that he may see them. Work done in the sorrow will bring him into ever new relations to the God in whom alone the full interpretation and relief of the sorrow lies.' Time and work, not as means of escape from distress, but as the hands in which distress shall be turned hither and thither, that the light of God may freely play upon it; it is a beautiful thought, and I know you realize its full meaning.

.
"I am sitting on the top of a ledge, overhanging a precipice, several hundred feet high; below me is what is known as Owl's Valley, about nine hundred feet down and not over half a mile wide, while behind is a forest of second-growth hard pine, through which the wind is sighing most sweetly, for there is quite a breeze just now, the forerunner of a coming tempest, which I can see approaching from the north. I will wait until it comes, and then crawl into a crevice of the ledge below and watch the storm go by; it is not half a mile off now, so I'll

unsaddle my horse and get into the cave at once. . . .

“I got in just in time, for now it is raining hard; the sun is shining off in the west, and there is a most beautiful rainbow just before me, making a complete arch in the sky. The birds have been singing all around me till now, and, as suddenly as the storm approached, they have taken to their shelter and are silent, save some tame geese that I can just see with my glass in the valley below; they seem highly delighted, and though they are so far away, their gabble can be distinctly heard. There has been a pygmy flycatcher on a dead tree near by, which has amused me greatly; he darts off into the air in a spiral course upward, catching without fail the insect he is after, then, instead of spiraling back to his perch again, he invariably darts head-first down to the same dead limb; he has had a real good meal since I’ve been watching him. An old turkey buzzard has just alighted on a pine not far off, and is eying me wistfully, as though he wished I might tumble down the ledge and break my neck. There he goes; he has undoubtedly given me up as not worth wasting time on.

“The storm has passed; it was much less of one than I anticipated, for it only rained ‘pitch-forks,’ with no lightning accompaniment at all, though it had been thundering in that direction

for some time previous to its arrival. I missed seeing the lightning strike in the valley; but I shall have a pleasure which, perhaps, I might not have had if the storm had been more severe and lasted longer, for the rain has freshened everything, even the souls of the birds, and they are all singing vociferously. Now, if you only knew the songs of the different birds, the mere mention of their names would carry you into the woods and you could hear them singing, even though you were sitting on the sofa in your library. Near by me, a black-throated green warbler is lisping away all to himself; down in the valley are several song-thrushes and a mocking-bird vying with one another. Chewinks, pine-warblers, now and then a great-crested flycatcher, scarlet tanagers, yellow-breasted chats, vireos, redbirds, and sparrows of several varieties — a veritable aviary — are all around me.

“ But I have n’t mentioned the most beautiful of all — the landscape and the clouds. Before me, at the foot of the mountain, is Owl’s Valley, with a stream running tortuously through it; beyond, half a mile away, is a ridge, perhaps three hundred feet high, running parallel to it; beyond this is the lovely valley of the Coosa, and fifteen miles away the mountains begin again, rising range on range for thirty or forty miles; on the south are more high hills, looking as though they would bar the river’s course, but it

finds a break in the walls and flows nearly eight hundred miles to the Gulf of Mexico. Looking northeast there is an expanse of lowlands extending forty miles, broken here and there by isolated mountains, standing by themselves like the Egyptian pyramids. It is not exactly a New England scene, yet it calls to mind the river Matthew and I looked down upon from Chocorua's peak, only then snow was over everything; but now the dark green of the pines, broken by the lighter greens of the oaks and maples, with the evening sun lighting them up and down the valley, affords a marked contrast to that scene. The sun, which since the storm has been concealed, is just breaking through the clouds. Part of the sky is blue, and part is hidden by dark purple clouds, while here and there a great piece of cumulus, lower than the rest, glows a gorgeous crimson, its great folds shaded with purple. Resting on the serrated tops of the little mountains are large masses of great white clouds looking like glaciated mountain-tops. Do you remember the Olympian Mountain range, just at the mouth of Puget Sound? I saw those mountains at early sunrise, when just their snow-capped tops were visible above the morning mist; they seemed to be almost overhead, and the sun, not yet discernible above the horizon, shone on them till they were a gorgeous crimson. I thought at first they were really clouds; and

now *these* great banks of cumulus, floating above the horizon, call me back to the deck of the steamer on Puget Sound. As I write, all has changed to a pink effect, and the highest ridge I see looks as if it were covered with pink azaleas, and the whole sky is reflecting them; it is fast fading, and in half an hour it will be dark, for the twilight here is very short. I miss the sunsets we have at home, for though their beauties are more subdued, they last longer; after all, there is nothing more inspiring or more elevating than to watch the sky at sunset from some high point.

“This recalls the sweet memory of the last sunset Herbert and I watched from the top of the bluffs above W. What a difference it would make in our lives if we could always live on the top of hills; our ills would seem less wearisome, and we should always be hopeful, no matter what business worries hung over us in the office. Whenever I am tired out, an hour spent on Lookout Mountain makes me feel like another fellow. Well, the night-hawks are flying about, and whippoorwills are calling from the valley:—

‘Now the day is over,
Night is drawing nigh,
Shadows of the evening,
Steal across the sky.’

If I do not take advantage of what light is left, shall have a difficult ride home.

"Saturday, May 4.

"I've had this letter all the week, and meant to have written another, this seems such a scribble, but I've not had a moment's time."

The work on the mill progressed with the trials, delays, and discouragements incident to an undertaking of such magnitude, but on the whole with much less friction than might reasonably be expected. On Christmas, 1895, a button was pressed in a distant city, which set the wheel of the great Corliss engine in motion. The "*Alabama State Herald*" of December 28 devoted several columns to a description of the mill and its surroundings. Speaking of Gardner, this article says: "He has a most pleasing address, keeps a cool head with unswerving devotion to duty, and it is an inspiration to see the enthusiasm with which he takes hold of every detail of the business. I took a walk up one of the streets of the new town, over whose future Mr. Nichols is having no end of pleasant speculation. He declares it shall be a model village, with no concealed weapons, no saloons concealed or unconcealed; that there will be ample public schools, a public library and reading-room, and a handsome union church. There are 150 cottages building and completed; a pleasing and striking feature of them will be the absence of sameness or monotony. Mr. Nichols has a remarkably win-

ning expression for a *Republican*, which he avows to be his politics, as though it were something of which to be proud."

March 8, 1896, Gardner sent a letter to his grandmother, which gives briefly his view of the village, as follows: "It is not very often that I write, but do not think I am forgetful of you; you can hardly realize what a busy time I have. Am on the jump from early morning till late at night. The mill is now started, but it will be June before we have everything in operation; the work is going wonderfully well, and I am much encouraged. We have our village nearly completed, and as there are trees all about, it gives it a very restful appearance. I only wish you could see it. Have started a school, a Sunday-school, and a church service; it is very interesting work, and I thoroughly enjoy it. Have a nice little house of five rooms and bath; two colored servants, a man and his wife."

On his last birthday, April 16, 1896, he wrote to the eldest of his three sisters, whose birthday had just passed, a letter of congratulation, and in speaking of the future, says: "I certainly hope the years to come will be as full of pleasure and good fortune as the past have been, for, taking it all in all, every one of us has had a remarkably smooth road to travel thus far. Of course many things might have been improved, but so it must always be. All of us children

should be especially thankful that through these years we have had such good parents, who have done so much for us. The older we grow, the more we shall appreciate it. As for myself, I could not be happier, for it would not be possible to find an equally interesting and absorbing occupation. It gives a chance for business and philanthropy, for work and study. I shall not want to come away until my ideal is reached, and hope I may not have to do so, much as I should like to see you all, and be in Boston."

In May, he welcomed his parents — the first visit his mother had made to his Southern home. It was a very busy time, all effort directed towards setting the last pieces of machinery in motion. He took great pride in showing his mother what he had accomplished, and in explaining his plans for the future of his village.

Before daylight on the morning of May 20, he went to the mill to superintend the moving of an electric generator which had reached the yard during the night, and which he was very desirous should be in position early that morning. The men had moved it along nearly to the bridge crossing from the storehouses to the main building; with the light of their lanterns a hasty examination was made to see that everything was secure. The machine had been moved but a short distance on the bridge, when the latter gave way, and Gardner fell with it, the machine strik-

ing him, and inflicting dreadful internal injuries. He was moved to the drug-store, where local physicians were summoned. There he remained, bearing his suffering most bravely, till the arrival late that night of a surgeon from Chattanooga, when he was removed to his cottage. Early the next morning an operation was performed, which revealed such conditions that the operating surgeon informed his parents he could not survive, and would probably live but a few hours.

After he had recovered from the immediate effect of the surgical treatment his parents had an interview with him, and noting the deep feeling which they in vain endeavored to suppress, he said, "You evidently think there is no hope for me;" and then, "I feel better than before the operation, and while there is life there is hope." His father thought best he should know the opinion of the surgeon, when, after a moment's pause, without emotion, he remarked, "Well, I am ready to go, but I would like to live to finish my work here." Later he seemed to be sinking, but rallied, and showed such vitality that it was thought there might be hope for him.

When the operatives began to occupy the houses, they brought sickness with them, which soon became epidemic; and as arrangements for a resident physician had not been completed, Gardner procured medicines, and, as he wrote his mother at the time, was "physician, nurse,

and undertaker," working hard throughout the day, and ready for calls which came at all hours of the night.

Because of this interest in their welfare, he had greatly endeared himself to his little community, and when this accident occurred, the greatest anxiety and sorrow prevailed. It was touching to hear the expressions of affection and sympathy, numbers begging that they might see him once more, and saying he was the best friend they had ever known. One of his assistants, who had been intimately associated with him from the first, was confident he would recover, saying, "Mr. Nichols has been such an example in this community for everything that is good, it does n't seem possible that he will be allowed to die." This interest of his operatives was reciprocated by Gardner, for he was often heard expressing the wish that he might be permitted to live to help his people. His friends from the adjoining city of Gadsden, who from the first refused to leave him, were unremitting in loving service; trained nurses were obtained, and Dr. H. was brought from Atlanta, remaining from Friday till Sunday morning. Eight days after the accident, the doctor returned with a special train in which to remove him to his sanitarium.

Before leaving Alabama City, forgetful of his constant suffering, Gardner insisted upon seeing

his leading foremen. He gave them definite instructions as to the work, and to one of the physicians in charge of his operatives his last words were: "Doctor, look well after my people, and let none of them die while I am away." Among others, two little boys from Gadsden came to bid him good-by. They were great friends of his, and he was much pleased to see them as they came in, daintily dressed, bringing flowers. He greeted them cheerfully, saying, "R. B., I am delighted to see you, and little Conrad too." After a brief stay they were taken back to their homes, three miles away; but in the afternoon, after Gardner had been placed in the car, sturdy little R. B. came bounding in, having begged a passing teamster to take him over to see *his* Mr. Gardner once more.

The journey of one hundred and fifty miles to Atlanta was comfortably made; on arrival, the mayor of the city was at the station, and insisted on walking beside the stretcher to the sanitarium, about half a mile distant. Here all were devoted in their ministrations, and everything possible was faithfully and lovingly done. It seemed at one time as though the brave spirit would conquer the lacerated body, and life be spared, and in this hope, his father left for home to attend to some pressing duties. But soon after his departure, Gardner had an unfavorable turn, and gradually grew weaker, falling peacefully asleep

at five o'clock on the afternoon of June 23. As hopes of his recovery had been entertained, his death came as a great blow to those who had noted each change, and as the days passed on had grown more and more hopeful. The daily papers kept his friends at Gadsden and Alabama City informed of his condition, and at the end were most kindly in their expressions of sympathy.

The "Chattanooga Times" said:—

"Mr. Nichols was only twenty-five years old, yet he had sole management of the construction of the large cotton mill of the Dwight Manufacturing Company at Alabama City, and was a young man of exceptional ability. His death has cast a gloom over Gadsden, for he was beloved by all who knew him."

The "Birmingham State Herald":—

"In the death of Mr. Nichols, this section loses one of her best citizens. He was loved by everybody, and was a leader among men."

A local paper: "All the chances were in his favor, so far as health, strength, nerve, a well-kept body and a life of temperate habits were concerned, but the odds were against him from the start, as from the terrible nature of his injuries, it was impossible for him, or any human being, to live and struggle back to health; but he made a brave, strong fight for life, and if ever a man deserved to live, *he* did. The entire city

regrets the young man's death, and none more than the 'Tribune.' He bade fair to rise to eminent heights in the business world, and it is always sad to see a life so full of promise go out in its bloom."

Every morning, so long as he was able, he read the service from the Prayer Book, his nurse reading it for him the last day, shortly before he lapsed into unconsciousness. The letters of his nurses to his mother best tell of his last hours.

One writes: "I hardly know how to begin, but perhaps you would like to know that your boy was not afraid of any fate that awaited him. One morning he wanted to get up and stand on the floor, and I said, 'Why, my dear Mr. Nichols, don't you know you can't do that, — it would almost kill you.' He looked at me with a smile, saying, 'Do you know, I've been thinking, and I'm not afraid to die. It is hard to tell just how this is going to end, but I do not fear the consequences.' The morning before he left us, I read the service to him. After Miss B. went down, he had me read more, then we talked about his little village. I asked him what denomination the church in the village would be, to which he answered, 'It will belong to all alike.' He was quiet a moment, then said, 'I feel I have done my duty to God and man; I have been attending the Episcopal Church in Gadsden

regularly, and have been benefited, and believe all is well with me.' I wanted to tell you these things while you were here, but could not, my heart was too full. He spoke often of his home, his village and his people, the little children he so loved, of his youngest sister, whom he wanted to see, and often in his delirium at night he would think *I* was his little sister. You don't know how I sympathize with you in your loss, and wish it might have been otherwise; if such a thing had been possible, I would gladly have given years of my life to have saved your boy. Such a life as his is a loss, not only to those who loved him, for we don't know what the world has lost."

As soon as the news of his death reached Gadsden, a meeting of the City Government was called, and the Hon. R. A. Mitchell, mayor of the city, and Mr. T. S. Kyle were appointed a committee to accompany the remains to Boston, and gave great help and comfort to the bereaved mother on the sad journey.

On the afternoon of June 27, when all nature seemed to welcome him who loved her so well, friends far and near, from the South and West, gathered at the Newton home to pay their last tribute of respect and affection. It was fitting he should be laid among flowers, and rarely beautiful they were. A large shaft was sent

by the employees of the Dwight Manufacturing Company at Chicopee, who could only be restrained from the most lavish giving by the agent's telling them "Mr. Nichols would not approve of extravagance." Rev. Dr. Calkins read comforting passages from the Scriptures. Rev. Dr. Davis made appropriate remarks, with selections from favorite hymns; and a prayer and benediction closed the simple and beautiful service.

All that is mortal of Howard Gardner Nichols now rests in Mount Auburn.

A memorial service was held at Alabama City at the same hour as that at Newton.

A lady intimately associated with Gardner in his philanthropic work writes: —

"Out of respect to you we decided to have Dr. Richardson, the Presbyterian minister, conduct the service, assisted by Mr. Agricola, lay-reader in the Episcopal Church, as Mr. Gardner worshiped with us, and loved our service. We learned that Dr. Richardson was in Kentucky, so Mr. Agricola took the lead, assisted by Dr. Boydston, the minister of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, who, having been almost constantly with us, was well acquainted with Mr. Gardner. The lady organist of the Gadsden church presided at the organ. The hall was

filled with sympathizing friends. Special seats were reserved for Hattie and Gates, Gardner's devoted colored servants.

"The service began with the hymn, 'Hark! Hark! my Soul,' then all the congregation repeated the Apostles' Creed. Mr. Agricola read the Litany, after which was sung, 'Asleep in Jesus;' then the burial service; the beautiful Psalms by Mr. Agricola and the congregation. Dr. Boydston made some excellent remarks, dwelling on the fine points we all so much admired. Mr. Agricola said he could not let this opportunity pass without expressing his thanks for the moral lessons he had learned from his observation of Mr. Gardner's daily life. One was his great patience. No matter what business pressed, he gave each person (and there were often crowds) an attentive, interested hearing. He listened to their troubles and comforted them. Again, he was no respecter of persons. The workingman, soiled by labor, had *his turn*, even if he did come in advance of the man in goodly attire. Then there was his keen appreciation of the force of example, his daily trying to do as he would be done by, and sacrificing personal pleasure where the indulgence might be a stumbling-block to some weaker brother. Mr. Agricola closed by reading one of Mr. Gardner's favorite hymns, one he often sang and played

upon his violin, 'Now the day is over.' The last two stanzas are particularly beautiful: —

‘Through the long night watches,
May Thine angels spread
Their white wings above me,
Watching round my bed.

‘When the morning wakens,
Then may I arise,
Pure, and fresh, and sinless,
In Thy holy eyes.’”

PERSONAL TRIBUTES.

“THE RIFFEL ALP, ZERMATT.

“WHILE at Berlin, a home letter told me of the accident. Curiously enough I had just been talking with Gardner in a dream, and the news came all the more directly home to me. I looked eagerly for news, and rejoiced when all seemed hopeful, and grew sad at every bad report. I cannot tell you how much moved I was at the news which came to me only yesterday. He had been making such a gallant fight that I felt he must come out all right. I simply cannot write at all calmly. I am completely unstrung. I knew little of what Gardner had been doing in the South, but mother sends me an account of his noble activity there. I have seen so much of selfish indulgence, idle dalliance, and wasted opportunity in my short experience that the thought of even so short a career of honest effort, hard work, and sympathetic devotion to others seems a long life and a well-rounded career in comparison. The thought of what such a life, spared, might be, is what comes home so crushingly upon us. What such a life *eternally* is, is the truer thought, I fancy.”

A classmate at school and college says : —

“I feel his loss very keenly, but as I think of him and look back upon his life, I feel sure that my life will be made better for having come in contact with his.”

The following tells its own story : —

“Although I have never seen you, I feel very much drawn to you because I was so fond of your son Gardner. I want to express my sorrow and sympathy, and tell you how much Mr. L. and I valued his friendship. We saw a good deal of him in Castine, and after that he visited us. The more we saw of him the fonder we became of him. We were impressed by his strength of character, and his kindness to everybody. We liked to talk with him, and enjoyed his bright young manhood and his happy spirits. Underneath it all we felt very strongly the unusual seriousness of his nature, and his determination to be of use in the world. Now he is gone, we feel the loss very keenly.”

The principal of the Boston Latin School, where for six years Gardner was a pupil, writes : —

“It affords me satisfaction to tell you, I am not unmindful of the great loss which this community has sustained by the death of Gardner. No one can recall his association with him without bring-

ing up the pleasantest memories of a noble life, which gave the promise of a most beneficent influence in his future career. How pure and gentle even in his school-days, yet firm as a rock for the right! How honorable and true in manhood! Such a life leaves behind it a fragrance that is rare, and ascends to heaven. The memory of it comforts and consoles even in the agony of bereavement. When Gardner gave me his photograph in 1889, it found a resting-place here, and has never been removed. Many a time have I looked on the likeness with satisfaction that so honorable a boy was once my pupil."

The wife of one of the professors at Harvard, in whose home Gardner was a frequent guest, wrote his sister, —

"It seems doubly sad that one so fitted for life must leave it almost as soon as he had shown his real qualities. I always had great faith in your brother's possibilities. His unusual executive abilities and his faithfulness to little duties seemed to me a rare combination. We had various long talks together, in which he impressed me strongly with his high, manly purposes and aims."

Rev. Dr. G. writes: —

"There is in my heart a great sadness that I should miss — and always on this earth — the

face of the eager and fine-spirited son — pride of his home, of whom I, as friend and fellow fraternity man, thought so much. Hearty is my sympathy with you in this great sorrow.”

A saintly friend, who has since passed to her reward, says, June 27 : —

“ I believe the Lord called Gardner to the wonderful work he has achieved at the South ; called him to be the helper of hundreds of toiling men ; called him to manifest to them how rich, and deep, and full an earthly life can be, through earnest, faithful, consecrated work ; and in so laying secure foundations for happy human homes, and an orderly civil life. How many hearts are touched to finer issues, through the quickening power of his noble self-forgetting manhood ; how long will shine in those distant States the beacon light of his loving, tireless influence ! ”

A letter from Mrs. N. expresses bereavement :

“ We also feel this sorrow as a personal one, for we have lost a dear friend in your son. He was more of a comfort to us in our trouble than words can express, so often sending us expressions of tender sympathy when our hearts seemed breaking with grief. He was so cheerful, courageous, and true under all circumstances that it seems as though a bright light had been put out,

and the world left poor and dark without his radiant spirit."

Mr. N. writes : —

" I well remember my first sight of Gardner. I can see him yet at some distance from the house, as he was coming towards me, with one of my own boys on either side of him, — tall and erect, so full of life and vigor, so much of manliness even then in his whole make-up, and yet so modest, and as gentle as a child. From the first he won a warm place in our hearts, and our home was open to him as it had never been opened to any one before or since. Those were lovely summer days he spent with us ; the young people were fresh from school, with all restraint lifted, and they were able to enjoy to the full whatever came to them.

" I was delighted to see how readily he adapted himself to all the different forms of enjoyment that were before him, always winning the esteem and respect of those with whom he came in contact. He was in every way a most manly fellow, always willing to do his share in the way of helping things along, whether in the drawing-room, or in a camping expedition, where the resources were limited, and where much depended upon what each one could do to make the expedition a success.

" I remember, too, what a great love of nature

was his ; the woods, the flowers, and the birds, as well as the wayside brook, all seemed to be old friends ; he knew them well, and nothing seemed to escape his observation.

“ I noticed, too, his wonderful power to rise above the little petty annoyances that are often found in the way of complete success in a day’s outing ; an unfavorable turn in the weather, or a dry and dusty road, was taken by him as a matter of course, and he would not allow it to interfere with the pleasure and enjoyment before him. With all the lovely traits possessed by him, it is no wonder that he so thoroughly won his way into our confidence and esteem that we were always glad to have him with us. It gave me great pleasure to see him undertake his work in the South ; he was so enthusiastic, so self-reliant, and so full of confidence, that I had no doubt of his success, and the only fear that at times disturbed me was that he might overwork, and thus become a victim to the terrible typhoid that prevailed in that locality ; but it never occurred to me that an accident of any kind could befall him ; he was so strong, so alert, and always seemed so well able to take care of himself, that it was long before I could realize that he could be so suddenly stricken down.”

“ After his terrible injury, what a manly fight he must have made for life, lifted up as he was by the thought and hope that there might yet be a chance for him to do much for those who still

needed his help ; and when this was denied him, his willingness to join in the companionship of those who had been among his dearest of earthly friends, to me is very pathetic.

“ I did not intend to say as much as this, but my mind has gone back to those happy days that will never come back to me, when Gardner and my own dear boys were standing on the threshold of life, with all its pleasant possibilities before them.”

A business associate says : —

“ I became strongly attached to him during my stay with him in the South ; a better or more honorable fellow than Gardner never lived, and I feel his loss keenly.”

From another business friend comes this message : —

“ I met your son at Chicopee, and at our very first interview he won a high place in my esteem. His character was so transparent and his disposition so genial ; yet, with all his attainments, he was so unassuming and cordial that,

‘ None knew him but to love him,
None named him but to praise.’ ”

A neighbor, whose sons had grown up with Gardner, writes : —

“ We all sympathize with you, and feel that

we, too, have lost a very dear young friend, for Gardner was to me the perfect ideal of a young man, and as I watched him grow from childhood to manhood, I have rejoiced with you that you had such a beautiful son."

A mother in Atlanta, Georgia, tells us : —

"It must be a great comfort to you to know that your son was such a fine character ; that it was not just mother love that thought so, but it was acknowledged by all with whom he came in contact. I shall be happy indeed, and consider myself most fortunate, if I can succeed in moulding my boy into such a man, who possessed the respect and love of all who knew him."

From the "Boston Transcript," June 27, 1896 :

H. GARDNER NICHOLS.

An ideal life cut short in its marvelous early morning strength and beauty ! An ideal character lost to love and honor and service of mankind just as its initial page of manifestation was complete ; one matchless page of a singularly heroic career, and the book closed by a strangely ruthless fate.

It is a story which could be told as a tale of the highest that modern man at his best of knowledge and culture and power, and Christian man at his richest of grace and truth, has achieved ; yet

achieved with but the step forward from youth, and the mere threshold of a great career, which death at twenty-five means.

The Iliad of human and Christian advance in the end of the nineteenth century of Christ, and in the America which best shows that advance, could hardly be written in more fit form than by an adequate narrative of the one stage of achievements which Gardner Nichols had brought to a close when a sudden stroke of fatal injury, and some weeks of hopeless heroic struggle, put a period to his life.

Almost immediately upon graduation from Harvard University with honors, Mr. Nichols undertook an enterprise of difficulty and magnitude, — that of representing his father, J. Howard Nichols, in the creation of a model cotton manufacturing plant at Alabama City, Alabama, one of the centres of the new South. Not only the knowledge and judgment of a rare scholar in practical matters, and an able thinker as well, were shown in Mr. Nichols's execution of his task, but there appeared in it also, and in his life in this new field, a passionate thoughtfulness, an enthusiasm of humanity, of benevolence, and of manly piety, which far more revealed the Christ of divine love than the master of capital and the executor of plans for manufacture and money-making.

The very last touch of the great work which is

now his monument was the occasion of his death. In the placing of a heavy dynamo, a platform gave way, and a violent lacerating blow left wounds which the surgeons could not hope to deal with. Yet for some weeks Mr. Nichols made a fight for life which at least added one more beautiful memory to a singularly rich volume of remembrance. Rev. Dr. Calkins, who is assisting this afternoon in the final service at Newton, speaks from fifteen years' knowledge, when he says that eulogy cannot exaggerate the example which this rare gentleman and noble Christian has left.

E. C. T.

From the "Tribune," Rome, Georgia:—

BLIGHTED HOPES.

I do not know when anything has impressed me more deeply than the death of young H. Gardner Nichols, in Atlanta.

So bright, so brave, so young, so full of the promise of noble manhood, he was cut down like a flower that had reached not its fullness.

It was my privilege to know him only slightly, but the acquaintanceship was one of the pleasantest in my experience.

As a boy he is said to have displayed evidences of those admirable traits of character that developed as he grew to man's estate.

A graduate of Harvard College, he had the additional advantage of daily contact with practical business methods.

When the idea of establishing a Southern branch was first conceived, he entered into it with a spirit and energy that were remarkable in a man of his age.

He was of a careful and painstaking disposition, the very soul of energy, active, and filled with that forceful enthusiasm which has made the name of Americans synonymous with successful progressiveness.

He came South at the time that Gadsden, or rather Alabama City, was decided upon as the most eligible point for the location of the Southern branch.

He was untiring in his energy and perseverance. He looked after all the details of the construction of the mill, and nothing escaped his untiring vigilance.

He was but twenty-five years old, yet his business sagacity was more highly developed than that of most men of twice his age.

He won friends among his social associates as well as among those who had business dealings with him, and no man was more popular in the circle in which he moved than Gardner Nichols.

It was with a feeling of sadness ineffable that I, even though I was but slightly acquainted with the young man, heard of the distressing accident

that was such a cruel shock to those whose highest hopes were centred upon him.

He struggled manfully and battled bravely for life, and was given every assistance that love and devotion could render, but all without avail.

In the flower of his youth, with the earliest laurels of youthful achievement fresh and unfaded upon his boyish brow, he was removed from the earthly sphere which he adorned to that higher region beyond our ken.

He was a true type of the honorable, ambitious young American, and he has gone to his grave, mourned alike by lifetime comrades and new-found friends.

The light of a hopeful life went out when the soul of H. Gardner Nichols took its flight to the realms beyond.

M. M. F.

The lady whose account of the Memorial Service has been given, and who has charge of the school established by Gardner, writes again:

"I do so miss your son! I often wonder if it is possible for him to be missed in all the varied departments of the work as he is in mine. It seems to me that, next to his immediate family, the blow falls most heavily on me. We so often discussed together the ways and means to uplift his people. Both of us being of a hopeful disposition, we expected in ten years, with a school

equal in all details to the best, a marvelous change — a model city with model operatives — that is, kindly, industrious, cleanly, and somewhat advanced in education. But, alas! alas! for all our castle-building in a missionary way. Your son and I attended the Easter services, the last time we were together in the little Gadsden church. The ‘dummy’ not running to accommodate church-goers, we walked back, so as to be in time for our own service. I shall never forget that walk. Of course ‘*our work*’ was the principal theme; that the want of gratitude, the want of appreciation should never deter one from a faithful following of *duty*, — duty, not as the world sees it, but as the earnest, humble follower of Christ sees it. Appreciation gives courage, but courage should be of that kind which does not die for want of it. As much as I need the school-house, I dread to see it begun, so fearful am I that it will be a disappointment. It would have been all right, if Mr. Gardner could have superintended, as he worked for the *future*, as well as for the present. The day-school closed June 26. Weeks before, the 27th had been set for our concert, and we were making elaborate preparations for us. But, alas! instead of songs of joy, on that day we held our Memorial Service.”

The following are from men of affairs, whose age and experience give weight to their words.

“TRION, GEORGIA.

“I have known enough of your son, and of the hopes and plans you had built on the rich promise of his young manhood, to have some sense of the weight of this blow ; but, even in the depth of your grief, you may find comfort in recalling his well-spent youth, and the abundant measure of pride and satisfaction which has already rewarded your fatherly care. Life is not measured by length of days, but by the work done ; and, so judged, your son lived far longer than his years would show ; I would we might all say the same !”

“ROME, GEORGIA.

“In the death of your noble son, the community in which he labored and built so wisely and so well has sustained a loss beyond repair.”

“ALABAMA CITY, ALABAMA.

“My emotion is too great to express, for I keenly feel your great loss and ours. I can truly say that never in all my life have I met a young man who gave promise of a better and more useful life than your son. You can find great consolation in knowing that you had a noble boy. The world would be better did it have more like him.”

“GADSDEN, ALABAMA.

“Your son commanded the admiration and high esteem of all who had the privilege of

knowing him, but the kindly courtesies extended to me in our business intercourse caused me to regard him as my personal friend. His bravery aroused the deep admiration of the whole community, and his death is a public sorrow."

The attorneys employed by Gardner write : —

"My partner and I extend our sincere sympathy in the great loss you have suffered, and which has fallen on us all. During our acquaintance and association with your son, we had learned to esteem most highly his business acumen and his moral worth, and we shall ever cherish his memory."

A prominent business man of Gadsden thus expresses the sentiment of not only that city, but of the whole section : —

"If there is any consolation in human sympathy, you, in your deep distress, should be greatly comforted. Our whole section, I may safely say every man, woman, and child who knew your noble son, mourns with you his untimely death. His devotion to business, his tender regard for the amenities of life, his respect and consideration for the worthy poor, won all hearts. We shall miss him as no man of his age was ever missed in Alabama. He had, as it were, become a member of our family. We felt for him in all his endeavors, and delighted to

lend our feeble aid in advancing his interests. It is no fulsome flattery to say that your son was the best 'all-around' man of his age I ever knew, and in his death our section has suffered an irreparable loss. He would have done more to aid in building up our industrial interests than any one will ever do, for his heart was in the work. He would have elevated and ennobled his operatives, giving them a new idea of life, and by a *personal* supervision of their surroundings he would have awakened higher aspirations. All feel this, and doubly mourn his loss. Dear friends, your son's precious memory will be perpetuated in the magnificent plant erected by him. His words of sympathy will be treasured by the worthy poor in whom he manifested such an interest; and long after you and I have gone to meet him in the unknown beyond, the name of Gardner Nichols will still be a household word in north Alabama. Take comfort in the reflection that God honored you to be the parents of such a noble son, and let sweet memories of him cheer you along life's pathway. When death summons you, you know that you will meet him among those who honored God and kept his commandments."

The following heart-felt words from men more nearly Gardner's age, and who were intimately associated with him, not only in business, but

also in friendly intercourse, throw a still more lovable light upon his life and character.

His instructor in telegraphy says:—

“I loved your dear boy as if he had been my own brother. I was attached to him by esteem and affection, and there was nothing in the world I would not have tried to do for him. He was all that was good and noble. We used to take little trips in the mountains together, and would stop by some brook and spread our lunch. I remember one evening when we were leisurely riding home in the moonlight, that our conversation drifted to the pains and sorrows of the world, and he said that he was willing to die at any time, that death had absolutely no terror for him; and at the same time he remarked that he felt his two dear friends, the N.’s, were often with him in spirit.”

The three following tributes are from young men who were in Gardner’s employ:—

“I cannot express the sympathy I feel for you all. If there is anything in the world I can do, I shall feel as if I was doing a labor of love for my departed friend, whom I miss more and more as the days go by. I saw Mr. M. yesterday, and he told me all about the services in Newton. Was so sorry I could not be there, but felt it my duty to stay here. I know Mr.

Gardner would have thought so. I want to see everything carried out as he desired, and will do all in my power to that end. All the instructions he gave me that last morning before he was taken to Atlanta, I have followed as closely as I could."

The next is from a young man who was so devoted to Gardner that he wished to watch with him day and night. One night Gardner sent him from the room four times, telling him to "go and get some rest," but each time the poor fellow came stealing back, unable to stay away from the friend he so much loved, and whom he so passionately longed to help:—

"No one will miss your son more than I, for I have lost a friend who could and would do more for me than anybody on earth. I shall never forget what he has done for me in the last year and a half. He was just as good and kind to me as if I had been his brother."

The youngest of the group writes:—

"I want to express to you my sincere sympathy and condolence in your great grief, the weight of which is surely a heavy burden. I am almost overwhelmed with sorrow myself at the loss of one whose many acts of kindness and expressions of confidence, in both word and deed, leave no manner of doubt of his true friendship

for me. In all my associations with him (nearly a year and a half) in his business office, never a word of displeasure escaped his lips, nor even a sign of impatience was ever visible. He taught me what I know of business. He set before me many examples of benevolence, morality, Christian love, and charity, and I want to say that it shall be my purpose in life to emulate his many virtues and his noble character as seen by me, and that his memory will ever be sacred to me."

One wonders how many such testimonies of patient and upright living could be given. No "word of displeasure, no sign of impatience" during those months of perplexing care and hard labor.

As he was in business, so was he in home life, as shown by the letter from Mrs. E.:—

"The remembrance of your noble son here in our mountain home comes back so vividly to me to-night, as I sit sorrowing over the untimely end of his bright young life. Here is where he cast his lot among us, and our home was the first he called home in this sunny Southland. We recall with pleasure his gentle companionship; even the *little* incidents of his life with us are refreshing memories. While he was with us he awakened in us the tender interest of sweet friendship. Many hearts mourn with you in

this bitter sorrow, and feel deeply the loss you have sustained. We realize that in the death of your courageous, noble son our community has lost one of its most valuable citizens, one to whom we could point our sons as an example of manly virtue, energy, ambition, fidelity, courage, and endurance. We who knew him in our homes know his most lovable traits. We feel that our homes have been honored by his abiding in them. We shall ever tenderly revere his memory, and shall point with pride to the grand work of his heart and hands in our midst."

A Gadsden gentleman writes:—

"We feel that the half has not been said that might have been truthfully written. Gardner's life was an inspiration to young men, and one that should not and will not be forgotten by any who knew him. We miss him very much, and shall always remember him with deepest affection."

The "Tribute of Respect" given below bears the date of Gadsden, Alabama, July 9, 1896.

"Our friend H. Gardner Nichols, having passed from this life into the greater and better life, the task of delineating his character as a man and a friend belongs to those who have known him from his youth up. It may, however, be permitted his friends who have known him but

a few short months, yet who have been deeply impressed by his noble character, to echo their sentiments of deep esteem, and to show in what manner he was held by all who knew him well. His death, coming as it did without the decay of years, a youth cut down in the flower of his young manhood, just at the threshold of what gave promise of a long and useful career, has its peculiar sorrow for those who have been favored by his friendship, and are left to mourn his loss. He came to this community in the full vigor of youth, equipped with an extraordinary intellect, and with a form evidencing perfect health, and, after but a few months, during which time he touched every heart with beautiful and indelible impressions, he goes from us, not back to his native land, but, answering 'Ready!' to the summons to the better world, 'he lies down in the night of Death, and awakens in the morning of Eternity!' Although his career was brief, like a meteor it shed forth a brightness which illumined the sphere through which he passed.

"He was *honest*. In his judgment, honesty was an element which every decent character should possess. He was ambitious, too, and did possess a well-rounded character; he was ardent and honorable as a friend, was no hypocrite, who for the sake of policy hid his real sentiments; he was philanthropic, keenly feeling the wants of the poor, and his death was their loss. Yet he

stood not in public places to offer alms, but dispensed his gifts with the quiet reserve of true charity. He was deeply religious, in that he believed true religion constituted the art of higher living.

“His courage was sublime, and when convinced of the correctness of his position, threats of personal violence could not swerve him the breadth of a hair from holding steadfastly to his purpose, until the desired end was accomplished.

“He knew not failure. Difficulties at which most men would halt and turn back seemed only incentives to a trial of strength, and he would attack and overcome them with a spirit and adeptness marvelous to behold. His extraordinary faculty for controlling business affairs came not alone from knowledge or experience, there was that in him which operated independently of tuition. His was the ‘spontaneous force of an untrammelled soul, genius.’ Before reaching the age of twenty-four, he was intrusted with a work of great proportions, and had nearly completed it in a manner above criticism.

“Having gathered around him, in the little hill village, more than a thousand souls who looked to him as employer and protector, he had impressed his individuality upon them by taking an active interest in their welfare both temporal and spiritual. He was ready to serve, and did serve them day and night; he taught them how

to live ; visited them when sick, ministering to every necessity ; and when he was dying, he expressed the greatest sorrow that he should be called away before he had completed the work of elevating them to a higher plane.

“Having the interest of his people at heart, and being imbued with a spirit of reform antagonistic to vices in every form, he was not loath to take upon himself the government of the town in which he resided, and as its Chief Magistrate frame laws that would insure economy, and prevent a vicious social life. Possessing the air of one mature in years, he found pleasure in that which was instructive, ever shunning the frivolities of life, and never forsaking business obligations to take up matters of less importance, but ready to step aside to speak a pleasant word or to do an act of kindness. One trait of character, his faithfulness to his friends, we would emphasize again. Those whom he loved never tired him ; he drew his friends to him, and bound them with the bonds of love, and his friendship was always ready for any test or trial. Belonging to a better and a higher age, he lived in advance of his many associates. We, who believe the world grows better, and minds grow brighter, can foresee many such characters as his in the future generations. We look upon his life here as one borrowed of the future, and given us as one worthy of emulation.”

The Mayor of Gadsden, Alabama, with which city Gardner seemed to be almost as closely identified as with his own, sends this sincere and loving memorial of the friend he valued so highly :

“The death of Gardner was to me a great personal loss and affliction. I knew him intimately, and had learned to love him as a brother, to admire him for his unsullied and exalted character, for his many, *many* noble traits of head and heart, and for the wonderfully harmonious development of his faculties. These manly characteristics were not held in reserve, and used as on ‘dress parade,’ but were conspicuous in his everyday life, and were part and parcel of his very existence. His manner towards his friends was elegant in its naturalness and simplicity, and he possessed that indescribable grace called ‘charm,’ in a most marked degree. His every action seemed to say, ‘I would rather be, than seem to be,’ and was the very antithesis of show. I want to say, for his credit and for your comfort, that if ever a young man held as the guiding star of his conduct the injunction of Solomon, ‘My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother,’ Gardner did. His devotion to his parents, and his loyalty to the teachings you gave him in his early youth, were matters which he frequently mentioned in conversation with me, and which he, without exception, always exhibited in his conduct towards his

fellow-men. His observance of proper lines of conduct was beautiful; he was as chaste and elegant in his conversation with men as the most refined and cultured woman. I always felt better for a long talk with him. He inspired others to nobler thought and achievement, and was as magnetic and forceful a man as I ever met. He was an ornament to his family, and to the grand commonwealth which gave him birth, and a blessing to our loved Southland in which he had cast his lot, and where he seemed so happy in the great work he wrought. I feel the world is better for his having lived in it, and could he have been spared to us, what great things were in store for him! In one sense he is not dead, for to 'live in the hearts we leave behind is not to die.' I often think of the very enjoyable trip he and I took to Montgomery about two years ago, when I went down to introduce him to my friends, Governor Jones and Governor Oates. Each of these gentlemen spoke to me of him some time afterward. He had impressed them as a young man of high character, earnestness, and great capacity for affairs. They were delighted that he had come to our State and would be one of us, predicting that he would be a leader in his chosen line of business. Had he lived, I think he would have loved our people and been devoted to our State. Alabama would have felt the impress of his genius, as our locality now feels it,

and he would have become a factor in her affairs. We needed him in our midst, and his death is the State's loss. It must be your greatest consolation to know that Gardner was so good; his life was an honor to his parents; and his exemplary conduct worthy of all admiration. Not one of the least of his characteristics was his big-heartedness. The poor, the destitute, the afflicted, the unfortunate, appealed to his heart with great effect. These classes always touched a responsive chord in his bosom; for them he had a tender sympathy. His inclination in this direction was unusually strong, and I am quite sure works of philanthropy would have engaged his later years had his life been spared.

"I read a passage not long since, which comes nearer describing Gardner than anything I can write; it is this:—

"He was chaste in his life, just in his dealings, true to his word, merciful to those who were under him, and hating nothing so much as idleness; in matters especially of moment, he was never wont to rely on other men's care, how trusty or skillful soever they might seem to be, but, always contemning danger and refusing no toil, he was wont himself to be *one* (whoever was a second) at every turn where courage, skill, or industry was to be employed.' This quotation would make a fitting epitaph for his monument."

OFFICIAL TRIBUTES.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

PASSED BY GADSDEN CITY COUNCIL ON THE DEATH OF
HON. H. GARDNER NICHOLS.

COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY OF GADSDEN, ALA.

CALL meeting of the Board held this 23d day of June, 1896. Mayor Mitchell explained object of the meeting to take action on the death of the Hon. H. Gardner Nichols, which occurred at 5.13 P. M., this instant, at Dr. Holmes's Sanitarium, in the city of Atlanta, Georgia.

After a tribute to the memory of the deceased by Mayor Mitchell, Alderman Green offered the following preamble and resolutions, which were adopted by a unanimous vote : —

Whereas, We learn of the death of our late fellow citizen, the Hon. H. Gardner Nichols, mayor of Alabama City, as the result of an accident which occurred at the Dwight Mill, on the 20th of May, striking down in the very dawn of his young manhood one of the grandest characters with whom it has ever been our fortune to meet, bringing sorrow to the hearts of all our people without regard to rank or station,

Be it Resolved, That this Board, representing and voicing the sentiments of all and every class of our population, hereby tender to the family of the deceased our heartfelt sympathy, assuring them that we feel that Massachusetts, in giving us as a citizen Hon. H. Gardner Nichols, gave us one of her brightest jewels, and we honored and loved him as though he was "to the manor born." Alabama mingles her tears with Massachusetts in this sad hour, and we can truly say that the short life of Mr. Nichols demonstrated the fact that sterling worth, active industry, strict fidelity, and noble charity are always appreciated, and are honored and respected in every land and by all people.

The Hon. H. Gardner Nichols's memory will live in Alabama so long as the noble qualities of heart and mind he possessed are appreciated, and his example of exalted manhood will be remembered as a beacon light to which the young men of our State will be pointed as worthy of their highest emulation.

Resolved, That as a mark of the high esteem and appreciation in which the Hon. H. Gardner Nichols was held by our citizens, the Hon. R. A. Mitchell, mayor of the city of Gadsden, and Mr. T. S. Kyle be, and they are hereby appointed by this council as an escort to attend the body from Atlanta to Boston; and that this preamble and these resolutions be spread upon the minutes,

and that a copy of the same be forwarded to the family of Mr. J. Howard Nichols, at Boston, Massachusetts.

Resolved, That we deeply sympathize with the people of our neighboring town, Alabama City, in their loss of the official head of that municipality, their distinguished young mayor, who had the development of that city and the welfare of its people so deeply at heart; to them it is an irreparable loss.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

PASSED BY THE ALABAMA CITY COUNCIL ON THE DEATH
OF HON. H. GARDNER NICHOLS.

The following resolutions of respect were passed at a meeting of the Council of Alabama City, on Saturday, June 27, 1896:—

Whereas, It hath pleased Almighty God to remove from our midst our beloved mayor, the Hon. H. Gardner Nichols, and

Whereas, Our said mayor, although a comparative stranger to our community, had endeared himself to every one in both his official and private capacity, by his uniform courtesy, kindness, and high character, to such an extent that he was elected to the position of mayor without opposition, and

Whereas, His death has removed a noble and fearless official, an honored citizen, and a beloved friend, be it

Resolved, By the City Council of Alabama City, that in his death our city and entire community has lost one of its truest and purest citizens, and our Board its wise and honored head; and that the enterprise of which he was the founder has suffered an irreparable loss.

2. *Be it further Resolved*, That our tenderest condolence be and it is hereby extended to the bereaved family, and in this hour of their deepest sorrow we point them to that All-wise Providence who doeth all things well.

3. *Be it further Resolved*, That a copy of these resolutions be spread upon the minutes of this body, a copy furnished the county papers for publication, and a copy sent to the parents of our deceased friend.

At a meeting of the directors of the Dwight Manufacturing Company, Boston, June 29, 1896:

"On motion of Mr. Amory A. Lawrence, duly seconded, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:—

"The Directors have heard with the greatest regret of the death of Mr. Howard Gardner Nichols, caused by an accident while in the discharge of his duties at the Alabama City Mill.

"We appreciate his high character, his industry, and great promise, and sympathize most deeply with his father in his great bereavement.

"This resolution to be placed in the records."

IN MEMORIAM.

H. GARDNER NICHOLS.

Since it has pleased Almighty God in His divine wisdom to take from among us the soul of one of our most beloved Vestrymen, H. Gardner Nichols, a man most closely identified with the best interests, and foremost in work in behalf of the Church of the Holy Comforter, of the Protestant Episcopal Church at Gadsden, Alabama, and whose charm of personality and charitable consideration were so prominently marked; a young man of keen intellect and sterling qualities, spotless character and kindliness of heart, endearing him to all, he strove to advance the cause of the Master in many ways.

May his influence not be lost; may it shed a ray of hope and encouragement about us which shall brighten the veil which God in His infinite wisdom has seen fit to let fall upon our Church.

Close as were the ties which bound him to us, we recognize that there are others to whom our deceased friend was held by still more sacred bonds, and it is the desire of this Vestry to extend to the sorrowing family our heartfelt sympathy in their bereavement. May they, as well as we, feel that it is the will of our Father, "who doeth all things well."

Resolved, That as a formal and lasting expres-

sion of our sorrow at his sudden and untimely death, these humble and inadequate resolutions be enrolled upon our minutes as suggestive of the love and esteem in which he was held by the members of this Vestry ; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to his bereaved parents.

Otto Agricola, *Warden*.

John C. Pugh.

W. W. Pettis.

O. R. Goldman.

Geo. W. Bowen.

Joseph Balfour.

Calvin D. Clarke.

On a recent visit made by Mr. Nichols to Alabama City, the first since the death of his son, he accepted an invitation to meet the operatives, at which time the following resolutions were adopted :—

“ We, the former employees of the late H. Gardner Nichols, who, as agent for the Dwight Manufacturing Company at this place, did so much for our comfort and happiness as to place us under lasting obligation to him ;

“ And whereas we, the remaining employees of said Company, who served under him here, feeling that we have sustained an irreparable loss in his sad and sudden death, desire to give expression to our feelings of sorrow and bereavement, therefore, be it resolved, that we rejoice in the presence of the father of him we admired and loved, and give him our cordial greetings and

sincere welcome, and extend to him, and through him to his bereaved family, profound sympathy, and assure him that we shall ever cherish feelings of gratitude and love for his noble son."

It has been the effort of the writer of this Memorial to place before Gardner's friends a picture of the true-hearted, honest boy, who developed into a noble, fearless, upright man; to show him as he was to his family, his friends, and those dependent upon him, and to do it with the loving simplicity which befits such a story of unselfish, loyal devotion to duty.

In this connection it seems fitting to quote one striking instance of the influence flowing from his life, and bearing fruit in the life of an entire stranger.

A college classmate of one of Gardner's sisters, who had visited the Newton home and knew him well, writes from her place of residence in Illinois:—

"Sunday night, at our League service, the last person to speak was a gentleman about thirty-five years of age. He said, in substance, 'Yesterday, while waiting in a business office, I picked up a paper. It was a mill paper, and my eye rested upon the notice of the death of a young man; it told of the beautiful life he had lived, of his care for those under him, of his manly nobleness, and most of all of that Christian character

which enriched his whole nature. I read on and on, thinking how such a life must have a force for good in that community. I do not know the young man, — he lived down South; but this I do know: reading the account of the beauty and nobility of that character has influenced my life, and made me start out to strive more earnestly to live just such a life of usefulness.'

"After the meeting I spoke to the gentleman, saying I thought I knew to whom he referred, and mentioned your brother's name; he said I was right — it was Gardner Nichols of whom he spoke."

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